

NATIVE LIFE

ON THE

TRANSVAAL BORDER

by W. C. WILLOUGHBY.



Illustrated from Original Photographs







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Introductory

THE educative influence of art has been apparent for many generations. And now our eyes are being opened to the instructive power of the simpler productions of pencil and camera. Time was when the lantern, for in-

stance, was regarded as a mere toy for the amusement of children ; while to-day no lecture-room or schoolroom is complete without it. And the railway book-stalls, crowded with illustrated magazines and papers, are proof enough that pictures are no longer the mere perquisites of youth. No doubt the change is due, in part, to the new methods of picture-making ; but it is also a frank recognition of the fact that the eye is often a better channel of instruction than the ear. The words of the traveller, though he speak with veracity and precision, are apt to recall scenes familiar to the hearer, rather ; or else to conjure up a



No. 1.

ON THE CROCODILE RIVER.



No. 2. ON THE CROCODILE RIVER.

colour that it is wont to associate with these forms. But to read the colour of the Wye into photos of the Crocodile, or that of an English landscape into the view from the Mission House at Palapye, is to misinterpret the pictures. When colour-photography becomes practicable, there will be no dearth of books which succeed where this one partially fails—in acquainting those who stay at home with the more distant parts of the empire. As things are, it may not be amiss to remind the reader that

dreamlike and impossible combination of them. An unseen artist paints a picture upon the mind as we listen ; and when, one fine day, we pitch our tents on the self-same plains, we laugh as we compare the imagery with the reality.

And similarly, though to a less extent, these little photos of mine are likely to mislead the eye. They are without colour ; and, like enough, the eye will read in the



JUNCTION OF THE CROCODILE AND NGOTWANE RIVERS. No. 3.

the verdure and fertility of England is not found in Bechuanaland. The reddish, sandy soil retains but little moisture ; and the heat of the African sun plays so constantly upon it that the landscape has a seared look for the greater part of the year. Were it not, indeed, for the marvellous depth of our African skies, nearly all these pictures might be rendered in little more than a series of browns and yellows.

And perhaps there is another remark that ought to be made at the outset. It would be a mistake to suppose that these are "Pictures of South Africa." They are pictures of a fraction of South Africa—the Bechuanaland Protectorate ; and not, indeed, of the whole Protectorate, but chiefly of the part that Khama governs. For South Africa is large ; and remarks that are true enough of one part, or one tribe, may be quite untrue if made of another. This book speaks of the Bechuana : it has no word to say of Kaffirs, Fingoes, Zulus, Swazis, or even of the Basuto, though the Basuto are in a sense Bechuana.



NEST OF THE TERMITES, OR "WHITE-ANTS." No. 4.

I
The Scenery



No. 5.

RUINS OF MISSION HOUSE, SHOSHONG.

THE scenery of Bechuanaland is monotonous. The railway, approaching from the south, first traverses what was once the Crown Colony of Bechuanaland. Hour after hour the train crawls over an extensive tableland, clad with long, coarse grass for the greater part of the year, and bare, to the eye of an Englishman, for the remaining months. Beyond Mafeking it passes into the Protectorate, where the brushwood becomes more plentiful as one proceeds. And as the line approaches Khama's country, it begins to force its way through an almost unbroken woodland of

scant and scraggy growth. At first, the traveller, tired of bare down, is cheered at the sight of anything that may be called a tree, even though it be but a prickly acacia ; but long before he reaches Khama's northern border, he feels the monotony of the scrub-wood. He remarks, also, the absence of water. If it be in the dry season, even the rivers are dry, though the bridges indicate the size of the freshets that flow under them in the rainy months.

In the old days of waggon-travelling one had to follow the waters, which meant that one saw the best bits of country. And there are spots on the river banks, especially the Crocodile, which are very grateful to the eye, while some of the little *vleys*, or pools, have their own peculiar charm for the jaded traveller. In the rainy season I have often heard Englishmen inquiring why so much beautiful



SITE OF THE DESERTED CAPITAL, SHOSHONG.



No. 7.

SUNSET ON THE CWPONG HILLS.

country is allowed to remain unoccupied, while thousands of our poor are cooped up in city slums. The fact is, that our poor need water all the year round, and this unoccupied land is itself parched for half the time. There are here and there spots that would well repay the labourer for his toil; but these are generally occupied by natives, whose ancestors have used them for many generations. And the rest of the country will never be of much value

till some one discovers an economical method of bringing artesian water to the surface. Now the railway is not so partial to the pretty spots. It takes you through the country in a fairly direct line, and gives you a clearer

idea of what the average square mile is really worth.

In Khama's country, as in the rest of the Protectorate, there are a considerable number of *kopjes*, or conical hills, isolated and boulder-strewn, and looking for all the world as if they were surviving peaks of great mountains whose valleys have been long filled up. The picturesqueness of these *kopjes* is often enriched by the presence of weird candelabra euphorbias and several varieties of aloes, which grow readily among the rocks.



MOTLHA TREE.

No. 8.

There are also some ranges of hills, the principal of which are the Cwening, Shoshong, and Cwapong ranges. The Cwapong hills are, perhaps, the most important. They are sometimes referred to as mountains, but that is

misleading. My aneroid has occasionally indicated an altitude of 4,500 ft., and there may be points 200 feet higher than that ; but the plains round the range are never so low as 3,000 feet. It is better to call them hills.



Some idea of the hill scenery may be had from the photographs numbered 5, 6, 41, 35, 7, 17, and 61, the first three numbers showing Shoshong, the fourth Cwening, and the remainder Cwapong hills. The *kloofs*, or gorges, which have water in them (like 61), are generally worth exploring. Occasionally the mouth of a *kloof* opens out like that at Shoshong (6), which, in the old days, accommodated a considerable portion of the town. There is one valley in the Cwapong hills, which extends for many miles and has several villages in it. But as a rule the *kloofs* are narrow, and the village, where there is one, is quite clear of the mouth.

The hills are quartzite, and contain no minerals of any value. Iron is fairly plentiful, and has been worked by the

natives in time past, and manganese is found here and there in the ravines. The hills are well wooded, though there is but little timber. Aloes of different kinds abound everywhere ; and in the season, their orange-red flower-spikes, peeping out from among the boulders, add pretty points of colour to the scene. Arboriferous aloes (7) are common, growing sometimes to a height of nearly twenty feet. For a week or two their many-branched flower-spikes are very gorgeous ; and, what with their yellow-green crowns and the variety of browns in their dead fronds—growths of former years that still cling to the stem—one has but to wait for the deeper shadows of sunset, and there is a pretty picture. Candelabra euphorbias, looking very spiteful, and weird enough to grace the garden of a master of the black art, are everywhere much in evidence.

And when one descends to the *kloofs* and the plains, there are trees that individually merit attention. In the *kloofs* the wild fig-tree flourishes, its abundant broad-leaved foliage giving grateful shade to the traveller, while its great clusters of figs, growing directly out of the trunk, provide food for the troops of monkeys and baboons. High up in the hardwood trees orchids occasionally display themselves ; and ferns of many kinds fill up the shady nooks among the boulders at their feet. On the south-east side of the



ENTERTAINING FRIENDS UNDER THE BAOBAB TREE.

Cwapongs, and also in the neighbourhood of the Cwening hills, there are baobabs and *motlha* trees. The *motlha* (8) is, perhaps, the most beautiful tree we have. *Motlha* is, of course, the native name: it is evidently akin to the olive. Its wide-spreading branches and dense evergreen foliage would easily shade a hundred men, whilst its myriads of olive-like berries are such an attraction to the birds that every tree seems alive with twittering.

The baobab (9 and 10) is an outlandish vegetable—a huge mallow. In the distance (*see* 17) it might be mistaken for a fine old beech. But upon closer acquaintance there is nothing under the sun that one could mistake it for. It is the hippopotamus of the vegetable world. It looks a little more natural when it is in foliage, especially when its large ivory-white petals, with their yellow, feathery stamens, are hanging from the branches by lengths of vegetable pack-thread; and last year's fruit, like small cocoa-nuts arrayed in threadbare, faded, green velvet, still cling to their uncouth parent. But even then one has a feeling that a great tree like that ought to do something better in the way of foliage, and when the leaves are gone, and the bloated trunk and gouty limbs culminate in a perplexity of overgrown twigs, it becomes grotesque. It reminds one of a bad case of elephantiasis. Dr. Livingstone found specimens on the Botetle River which were from 70 to 76 feet round. I have seen such trees in what is now German East Africa, but never anything so large in Khama's country.

The nest of the white ants, or Termites (4), is common enough, especially in the low-lying lands; but these interesting little pests do not thrive in sandy soil, and their hills, or nests, are not nearly so large as they are farther north. The best remark I can make about their habits is: read chapter vi. in Prof. Drummond's *Tropical Africa*.

The People



No. 11.

THE CHIEF KHAMA.

THE four ruling tribes of the Protectorate are Bechuana — the Bangwaketse (Bathoen's people), the Bakwena (Sebele's people), the Bakgatla (Linchwe's people), and the Bamangwato (Khama's people). They are independent of one another. It is a mistake to imagine that Khama is the superior of the other Chiefs. He is better known, whether it be from his greater age or his sterling character, but there is no political superiority whatever. Cleavage has long been the order of the day among the Bechuana. The Bangwaketse and the Bamangwato hived off from the Bakwena before we knew them; and probably there was a time more remote when the ancestors of the Bakgatla and the Bakwena were one community. They all speak the one tongue, and inherit the same customs; and, since the strong arm of the Imperial power prevents an appeal to the spear, and the minority no longer fear the majority, the process of segregation goes on more merrily than ever.

Living under the protection of each of these four tribes, smaller tribes are to be found, who are also of Bechuana origin;

and in Khama's country there are villages of Makalaka, whose fathers fled from northern homesteads to escape the doom of those who bent their necks to the Matabele yoke. Some of the finest natives that I know live in these Makalaka villages. Bushmen, too, are to be found living in temporary booths in the wilderness, hunting the game and digging the roots for a while, and then migrating to some new field. They are tributary to the Chief in whose territory they dwell ; and they send him furs and render him service in token of their allegiance.

Khama, Sebele, and Bathoeñ visited England in 1895 ; and two books were then published, dealing with them and their countries. Instead of crowding these pages with remarks about the Chiefs, it seems wiser to refer the reader to Lloyd's *Three Great African Chiefs* and Hepburn's *Twenty Years in Khama's Country*.

I do not happen to possess a photograph of my friend Bathoeñ, and I am sorry for it. I tried hard to get Linchwe's upon one occasion, but he has superstitious fears of the camera which no arguments of mine could overcome.

Pictures 14, 15, and 16 are included from a desire to show a few types of Bechuana faces ; but they are all people of some importance. Sekgome is Khama's only son. In the natural order of things he would succeed to the chieftainship, but the Imperial authorities have already warned him that his succession will depend upon his present political behaviour. Bessie and Milly are, respectively, Khama's eldest and youngest daughter. Milly is still a schoolgirl. Bessie has been married for many years, and Racosa is her husband. He is a clever fellow, but his pragmatical temper must be controlled by loftier principles if he is to gain the respect of Europeans. Morwa is the husband of another of Khama's daughters. Mphoeñ and



No. 12. THE CHIEF SEBELE.



No. 13. MILLY, ONE OF KHAMA'S DAUGHTERS.



SEKGOME, KHAMA'S ONLY SON.

No. 14.

Rraditladi are half-brothers to Khama. They rebelled against the Chief in 1895, and have since lived beyond his borders. Kebailele is a brother to Khama; and Gorewañ is the eldest son of Khamane, another brother. I should

like to include a photograph of Khamane ; but he has an idea that in the process of being photographed virtue would go out of him ; and Khamane, poor fellow, cannot afford to lose much of that.

Montsioa (16) was chief of the Barolong who live at Mafeking, which is on the borders of the Protectorate. He was a remarkable man—shrewd, forceful, well acquainted with the sinuosity of native thought, a rain-maker of great reputation, and an ultra-conservative in all matters of native custom and belief. He died about three years ago, not long after this photograph was taken, at the age of eighty-seven ; and the service he rendered his own tribe was, perhaps, never so thoroughly appreciated as now that his young scapegrace of a son sits in the *Kgotla*.



No. 15. HEADS OF THE CLAN.



THE CHIEF MONTSIOA.

No. 16.

III

Homes of the People

A GLANCE at picture No. 17 will give the reader a general idea of the plan of a Bechuana village. And even Khama's town—perhaps the largest native town in South Africa—is nothing more than a collection of villages. If one walks through the town, the scene is, of course, very different. But there is nothing that can be correctly described as a street. The native equivalent for a street scene is seen in 18; only it ought to be said that the disreputable hut in the foreground of this



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF A CWAPONG VILLAGE (MOREMPS).

No. 17.

B



No. 18.

STREET SCENE IN THE NATIVE TOWN, PALAPYE.

picture is unusually small and poor, apart from its broken-down appearance. Khama's sanctum (19) is rather better than the average; but it gives a more correct idea of what the average hut is like. Each hut is built by the people who inhabit it. And when in the course of a few years the hut becomes too populous for the nightly comfort of the thick-skinned natives, they leave it in possession of the Philistines, and build a new one. Some of the better poles may be used again, but most of it is mere firewood.

Friends, looking at the photographs, have suggested that a hut must be very stuffy. But a native hut is usually well ventilated. The roof is supported on a circle of upright poles planted in the ground, and the walls are built



No. 19.

CHIEF KHAMA'S "SANCTUM SANCTORUM."

inside the circle, and do not touch the roof anywhere : there is, thus, a clear space for ventilation all round between the walls and the roof. True, the thatch holds the heat long after the sun has set, and the temperature beneath is often unpleasant in the evening.

Notwithstanding the number of European houses that

are dotted here and there over the Protectorate, the natives have done but little to improve their style of building. As a rule, the walls are now built of sun-dried brick instead of wattle and daub, and a window and door are often inserted. But there the improvement ends. Sebele and Bathoëñ (20) employed Boers from the Transvaal to build their houses, and it is hard to say what style of architecture has been adopted. One or two of the smaller native gentry, also, have houses



CHIEF BATHOËÑ'S HOMESTEAD.

No. 20.



No. 21.

IMPROVED NATIVE DWELLINGS (SEKGOME'S, PALAPYE).

that are distinctly in advance of what their fathers knew. Sekgome's (21) is not pretentious, but it is an improvement; and at Kanye there is a still better specimen (22) belonging to Tsime, one of Bathoeñ's relatives. If the native has a fire in his hut—which he does occasionally—the smoke is left to find its way out as best it may, but Tsime has provided his home with a chimney.

Perhaps the most characteristic features of a native dwelling are the verandah and the courtyard. The verandah is obtained by flattening one side of the wall, causing the eaves to project a little more on that side, and raising a low platform of beaten earth underneath it. Here the seat of honour is placed for the visitor; and here, in Christian households, the father of a family sits at eventide to conduct family worship (52).

The courtyard is usually a tiny space in front of the hut, enclosed with a rustic fence of intertwined branches, or of large reeds from the marshes. Two capital specimens of these reed fences are very much in evidence in No. 21.

The floor of the little courtyard, like the platform of the verandah, is made of beaten earth, and smeared

carefully with the clay and cow-dung mixture that is so dear to the heart of a native housewife. On one side of the gateway there is a curious little circular arrangement—a slightly hollow space in the ground, marked off with a raised rim of clay, and furnished with hearthstones. Here the cooking for the family is done, and the women folk are often to be seen presiding over clay pots of native design and workmanship, or gipsy crocks that were bought at the store. The hearthstones are mere ordinary stones from the countryside, and the visitor would perhaps scarcely notice them at all. And yet woe to the unfortunate man whose wife goes home to her friends and takes her hearthstone with her. No word that she could speak would be half so eloquent of her attitude towards him and her intentions for the future.

One wonders what influence the new hut-tax will have upon the building of native houses. As it is, the hut is a poor affair. But everybody who is anybody, has a number of them, and different huts are often allotted to different members of the same family. It is a moot point whether the hut-tax will induce these people to build houses with more than one room, or whether it will mean fewer huts and more overcrowding.

In a native town there is scarcely any attempt at sanitation, and it is only the pure, dry air and the hot African sun that keep it at all healthy. Were a similar state of things permitted anywhere in England, it would not continue six months without a terrible epidemic. And yet it cannot be said that such diseases as typhoid are at all common in our native communities.



IMPROVED NATIVE DWELLINGS (TSIME'S, KANYE).

IV

Native Government



No. 23.

COURT HOUSE, PALAPYE.

THE Imperial Government is paramount in the Protectorate, and British Magistrates are resident at Gaborone's and Palapye (23). The law of Cape Colony prevails in the territory, in so far as it can be applied, together with such laws as may be proclaimed from time to time by Her Majesty's High Commissioner. The Magistrates have jurisdiction over all white men, and, indeed, all strangers of any colour; and as Assistant Commissioners, they handle any political or other business that may arise between the

High Commissioner and the Chiefs. But the administration of justice within the tribe is vested in its Chief, except that the Magistrate deals with all cases of murder, and all cases in which a white man is implicated. Khama, for instance, may often be found in the *Kgotla*, or Place of Tribal Assembly (24), judging the quarrels of his people.

The line between the judicial and the political is not very clearly drawn in native society, and trouble sometimes results from the confusion. But distinctly political gatherings of the tribe are convened at the will of the Chief, who is in this matter amenable to pressure. The assembly is generally held in the *Kgotla* at "Sun-up"; all the adult males of the tribe are entitled to be present, and there is much speaking, some of which is occasionally to the point. If the question is important, the debate may continue till the sun is high in the heavens, and then perhaps be adjourned till the following day. The Chief rarely, if ever, presides at these meetings, but they continue till he closes the debate. These popular assemblies, if they serve no better purpose, acquaint the Chief with the drift of public opinion, and act as safety-valves for native political feeling.



THE KGOTLA, OR PLACE OF TRIBAL ASSEMBLY, PALAPYE.

Starting Life

HUMAN nature is essentially the same all the world over, and No. 25 will surely explain itself, notwithstanding the difference of local colour. Quite an accidental meeting, no doubt, as the youth comes home from his

herding ! And yet the leaves on that branch have to suffer, because somebody's nervousness runs into her fingers. The little affair has apparently not gone far ; but "everything comes to the one who can wait for it," and one of these days, "for better, for worse," that simple calico gown will no doubt be exchanged for the glory of bridal attire (26).

The old Bechuana marriage customs were peculiar. Marriage was not arranged by those whom it most concerned, but by their more experienced parents ; and the wishes of the girl, especially, were often ignored. What the young man was, mattered but little, providing his father had oxen and

willingness to pay up. I speak of the first marriage ; for after that the young man was free to make his own choice—which he seldom failed to do. Polygamy was the rule ; and divorce was common. But for years past there



No. 25.

"'GIN A BODY MEET A BODY."

has been a change. Occasionally a youngster will introduce one to his mother and his "father's other wife," but the younger people in Khama's town look upon polygamy as bad form; and it is likely that the influence of the Chief has had much to do with this change of view.

For three or four years it has been possible for natives of the Protectorate to marry according to British law, and though they naturally take to new arrangements with reluctance and suspicion, there is a tendency among the more intelligent of the younger generation to avail themselves of the privilege. They insist, however, that such a marriage involves the right to choose their own partners. One hesitates to prophesy, unless one knows, but the transference of divorce from the parochial jurisdiction of the *Kgotla* to the British court, with its dignity and inflexibility—and that is what it means—will surely do something to elevate marriage, and thus prove a step in what Prof. Drummond calls "the evolution of a mother."

I cannot pretend to admire the costumes that are worn at our native weddings; but then I do not admire the ordinary every-day garments. I can stand the native of the far interior, in his birthday suit and eighteen inches of some other material, and I admire the natives of Zanzibar in their long, white, Arabic *kanzu*; but when the Bechuana array themselves in an odd lot of misfitting English clothes, they hide the grace and dignity of carriage that is sometimes theirs by nature; and it is really absurd to see the close-cropped woolly heads of our native women under English hats, especially when they have



A NATIVE BRIDE.

insisted on substituting
rials for that of the

The problem of how
is not so difficult for the
country as it is for young
first thing is a house, and
must be built. It is the
poles, bring them home,
the hut; and now that
for the walls, he will pro-
them. But the woman
thatching (27); and when
will make a mixture of
plaster the walls and the
to leave a smooth and, it may be, decorated surface. But how much of this work the young people will do with their own hands depends upon their social position.



No. 27.

THATCHING.

their own choice of mate-
milliner.

to get a home and keep it
young people in Khama's
folk in England. The
as it cannot be hired it
man's business to cut the
and fix the framework of
sun-dried bricks are used
bably make them and lay
will cut grass and do the
the roof is complete she
clay and cow-dung, and
floor with it, taking care

There is not much room in a hut for furniture; and, after all, it must be conceded that the presence of furniture accounts for half the daily tasks of a woman's life. A few cooking-pots, a blanket or two, a few odds and ends in the way of knives and plates, and possibly a bedstead, and they will be quite happy. Not that the bedstead is essential; a skin-mat laid on the floor is all that most people have. But ours is a luxurious generation!

VI Women's Work

THE Bechuana are farmers. It is their custom to live in large communities, and in the immediate neighbourhood of the Chief; and yet they manage to combine farming with town life. Their division of farm-labour is unique: agriculture is women's work, cattle-raising is the employment of men. Of the latter we shall speak presently; at the moment we are concerned with the former.

All the arable land in the neighbourhood of a native town is marked off as gardens. Khama's town is not well situated in this respect, and few gardens are near home. Some of them are twenty miles away. But these gardens are very different in size from our English allotments. They vary, but they are seldom small. There is no idea of freehold or of rent. The Chief allots a garden (sometimes more than one) to every family, and as far as possible neighbouring families have neighbouring gardens. If a family can cultivate more land than it already has, the Chief increases their



"MEALIES."



No. 29.

KAFFIR-CORN.

holding, and if good land falls out of cultivation, it is allotted to some one who can use it.

The principal crops are Kaffir-corn (29) and maize, or “mealies” (28), to use the South African term; but sweet-reed, melons, pumpkins, and occasionally ground-nuts, beans, cucumbers, and tobacco, are also grown. Tobacco, however, requires irrigation, and that is possible only at rare intervals and in very minute areas.

In former times the women did almost all the work that was done upon the land, using a short-handled, broad-bladed Kaffir hoe; but of late years the plough has come into use, and there are few men who do not possess one and know how to use it. Not that they plough straight furrows—a straight line is foreign to the native mind; but inspanning their oxen they plough the ground

to their own satisfaction, and sow the seed. And so the plough rescued the women from the hardest of their toil. Three years ago, however, the rinderpest came into Khama's country and killed about ninety-five per cent. of the cattle, and as the people relied upon the ox for all their haulage, the ploughs have since lain idle, and the women have returned to their hoeing. But there is this difference: the men work with the hoe alongside their wives.

As soon as the first rain falls and softens the soil, the people flock out of the towns and begin ploughing and hoeing. Very few of them find it possible to return home at night, for, as I said, most of the gardens are a good way off, and the custom is to take the whole family to the gardens for the ploughing season. For this reason, many of the gardens are provided with huts, which, though poor affairs, serve as shelters from the rain, and the native is content with scant accommodation. Khama's town looks very desolate at this season of the year. There is, perhaps, not one house in ten that shows signs of habitation; and yet trade is not dull at the stores, for the people are constantly coming and going, and they never spend their money so freely as when work goes merrily on in the gardens. As the earlier crops begin to



EVENTIDE.

No. 30.

mature, one cannot go far on any side of the town without meeting folk who are returning home. Women with babies strapped to their backs, grain rolled up in their blankets and tied round their waists, and baskets of food-stuffs on their heads, all wending their way homeward and asking the news as they pass. Very seldom, indeed, does one see a woman returning empty-handed from the gardens. If nothing else, they bring bundles of firewood to lighten the labour of some other day.

In visiting outlying villages at this season of the year, where the gardens are usually close at hand, it is pleasant to watch the tired country folk wending their way peacefully homewards as the shadows of even lengthen (30).



No. 31.

USING THE FLAIL.

But when the harvest is fully ripe there is more bustle than ever, for all the grain must be brought to the town, whatever the distance of the garden. And then it is, perhaps, that the results of rinderpest are most painfully felt. When the cattle were living, the ox-waggon did the work ; and night and day, along all the roads into the town, the crack of the great ox-whips and the clamour of the drivers told the tale of

harvest-home. But now the waggons are few ; and instead, one sees hundreds of tired people struggling along under heavy burdens of grain.

Many people do their threshing in the gardens now, so that the grain may the more easily be carried. But the bulk of the threshing used to be done in the town, and almost every hut is still provided with a threshing-floor (31), where the women use the flail. The flail is a mere cudgel ; and the group of women who sit round the heap of corn, hammering out the grain from its husk, and covering themselves with dust, make their strokes keep time to the threshing ditty that they sing. The threshing-floor is made, as all floors have been made in Africa from time immemorial, of beaten earth smeared with cow-dung.

After the threshing comes the storing of the grain, and here there is room for ingenuity. Weevil are a terrible curse in South Africa, and people are at their wits' end to keep grain from the ravages of these pests. But the Bechuana manage it in a very simple way. They build a large circular clay receptacle, supported on legs, as our corn-ricks are, that it may not be damaged by rain or attacked by mice. It is built just where it is to stand, for it is too brittle to be moved to another site. After making the floor of the vessel, they build its sides up a few inches, letting the clay bake in the sun before more is added to the height. When it reaches a height of five feet or so, it is closed with a dome-shaped top. But an aperture is left near the top. When the whole thing has become thoroughly



BECHUANA GRANARIES.

No. 32.

baked in the sun the grain is stored in it, the aperture hermetically sealed with clay, and as a shelter from the rain a roof of rough poles and thatch is built over it, like a huge umbrella (32). Grain will keep for years in these receptacles if the seal is not broken.

It is commonly supposed that South African natives are great flesh-eaters. Nothing can be farther from the truth, as far as the Bechuana are concerned. They like flesh. I should not care to imperil my reputation by stating just how much some of them would manage to eat at a sitting, if you paid for it; and yet the majority of them rarely touch meat unless an animal happens to die. Their staple food is porridge, which is made of Kaffir-corn; and the preparation of this porridge is a part of the woman's daily task. The grain is first pounded in a wooden mortar

(33), till it becomes meal. Then the bran is sifted out with a simple winnowing-fan, like that used by the woman who sits near the mortar in No. 33, and it is made into a stiff porridge. Kaffir-corn porridge is very nutritious, but it requires a good digestion. As for table arrangements, a glance at the happy group squatting round the porridge-pot in No. 10 will reveal the common practice. But many people serve out individual messes in wooden bowls, and some actually have plates and even spoons! The work of the cook is, however, greatly lightened by the fact that two meals a day is the correct thing in Bechuana homes, and one will often suffice.

But whatever the number of meals, the women and girls must fetch water before they can do much cooking;



No. 33.

POUNDING AND SIFTING CORN.

and frequently the water is a distance away. The water pots are made of a clay that burns almost black. The women mould the pots by hand, without the aid of a potter's wheel, and No. 34 shows the common shapes and sizes. But no picture will give an adequate idea of the weight of these pots when full of water. After taking the picture, I failed to lift some of the pots to the level of my own head, and yet these girls carried them nearly two miles from the spring to their homes, balancing them beautifully with scarcely a touch of the finger.



FETCHING WATER.

No. 34.

The average Bechuana woman can hardly be said to have a graceful figure ; but it cannot be denied that she has an erect and graceful carriage, for which she is largely indebted to the waterpots that she carried in her youth.

If Bechuana women had to carry water for all the household duties that are familiar to an English housekeeper,



No. 35.

WASHING CLOTHES.

they would have a life of drudgery indeed ; but they manage to take some of their household duties to the water instead. The family wash (35), for instance, is done at the spring—when it is done at all. But the Bechuana are not Pharisees in the matter of washing ; and even when they take their washing to the spring, it gets less attention than the gossip. Nor can it be said that either the washing or the gossip is peculiarly the work of women. All Bechuana delight in hearing and retailing any scrap of local or other news. The women will stand with heavy waterpots upon their heads to gossip with the men who are idling between the village and the water (36) ; and the men enjoy it as much as the women. But then, they have little excitement in life ; and they

may at least plead in self-defence that they do not retail the small talk of the neighbourhood for the sake of mere financial gain.

To conclude a chapter on “ Women’s Work ” without some reference to dressmaking and its kindred arts would be, perhaps, a strange proceeding. But, truth to tell, the Bechuana women have not been wont to devote much time

to such interesting employment. In the old days the making of women's garments devolved largely upon the men; for the garments were made of the skins of goats, sheep, antelopes, and fur-bearing animals; and the men were clever furriers. Little girls wear curious string aprons—tiny imitations of the string curtains that we import from Japan, but of vegetable fibre instead of beads. And these are made by the women. In recent years the women have shown a growing preference for cotton garments—generally prints; and it is no uncommon sight to see a woman busy with her needle, and even with her sewing machine, while every English woman in the place is beset with importunate requests for aid and guidance in the “cutting-out” of dresses. I am afraid very few of our natives have mastered the art of

“fitting,” as it is understood by European dressmakers; but the girls are taught sewing in the Mission Schools, and are improving even in that respect. The tight, unshapely bodice and sleeve that prevailed a few years ago, are gradually giving way to more becoming and healthful fashions. And upon occasion one meets a woman of position arrayed in garments of better make and more costly material. But I never yet met one whose clothes suggested even the dawning of a sense of fitness.



GOSSIP.

No. 36.

VII

Men's Work

FEW of the Bechuana men have much enthusiasm for work. The notion of barbarism is that men are made to hunt and fight, and that drudgery is the lot of women ; and it is a far cry from barbarism to civilisation—much

farther than it is from civilisation to barbarism. The appetite for work requires more cultivation than the appetite for clothes, or even for books. But the men are improving—distinctly improving ; though it must be confessed that too many of them are reluctant to do much between meals.

The days for fighting are now practically over in the Protectorate. But the military organisation of the tribes still continues ; and in military matters the Chief is supreme. The regiments are graduated according to age, and every male belongs to a regiment. Indeed, the common way of asking a man's age is to inquire the name of his regiment. If Khama wishes a regiment to assemble, some trumpet-tongued individual ascends the tree-stump in



No. 37.

HERDING THE GOATS.



No. 38. INSPANNING.

the foreground of the *Kgotla* picture (24) and shouts out the command. That tree is quite a mile from my house, but, in the early morning, thanks to the still, dry air, I often hear every word of the proclamation. There is no sign of military life except when a regiment is assembled ; and even then one sees nothing but a noisy crowd in the usual miscellaneous native attire. No regiment is ever assembled unless it be for service—generally for the doing of some more or less public work. And to watch a regiment at work is really interesting ! I have seen them fetching water for building purposes, each one trudging laboriously home from the pool with as much as he thought he could carry in an old jam tin, or a condensed milk tin ! What does it matter ? They are not paid for it, and there is seldom a set time by which the work must be done. This

labour is almost their only form of taxation ; and, I suppose, the regiments do not average ten days' work a year.

As for hunting, there is much less to hunt than there used to be ; but it is still the delight of a native's life. They make very beautiful karosses, too, from the skins of the fur-bearing animals.

But I have already stated that cattle-raising is the work of the men. Just as each family has its garden ground, so



TREKKING.

No. 39.

each family has its cattle-post. The cattle-posts are scattered all over the country. But the boys begin life herding the goats (37). Whatever the father's station in the tribe, there is nothing *infra dig.* in sending his boy to herd

the goats; and when the youth is promoted to the herding of cattle, he gets ideas of his own importance that are not always pleasant to his neighbours.

This early training stands them in good stead when they take up waggon travelling. In comparison with the Cape boys they are not good drivers, but they soon become capital leaders — for in ox-waggon travelling it is necessary to have a leader as well as a driver. Now a good driver is invaluable, and perhaps that is why good drivers are comparatively rare.



No. 40.

OUTSPANNED.

Reins are not used in driving oxen. Each of the 16 or 18 oxen in the span has its own name, and if it be well trained, will answer readily, though it may need an occasional touch of the whip. But a good driver cares more for the moral effect of the whip than for its actual use. And he will do his steering with the voice. But it is the leader's duty to lead the front pair of oxen with a thong that is tied round their horns, whenever there is any difficult bit of steering to do ; and he has also to herd the cattle when they are outspanned for grazing.

My space is too limited for many details of waggon-life ; and besides, every traveller has his own idea of what is best. But roughly this is the routine : At "sun-up," or before, the oxen are inspanned, or put under the yokes (38), and the first *trek* (journey) is made. Now there are no roads in the Protectorate. What we call our roads are little more than the tracks of preceding waggon-gons, with rocks and tree-



TIED UP FOR THE NIGHT.

stumps very much in evidence. A good driver will avoid these obstacles, but with the average specimen it is no uncommon thing for a wheel to strike a rock with a bump, climb laboriously and complainingly up the one side, and drop down the other as if it meant to make up lost time. There are no springs to an ox-waggon, but on such occasions there is usually a little spring in the man inside. After *trekking* or going (39) for three or four hours, the oxen are outspanned, or unyoked, and turned into the grass on either side of the road. Then the driver mends his whip—and it is astonishing how much time some drivers spend in this employment. The leader looks after the oxen. The travellers cook their food over an open fire (40). And so the day is spent. After the heat of the day

has passed, the oxen are brought in and again put under the yokes, and there is another trek—perhaps two short treks; when they are outspanned for the night (41). If the country is open and the oxen can be depended upon, they are sometimes allowed to graze through the night; but more frequently they are tied to the great steel trek-chain that runs through from the waggon-pole to the farthest yoke, where they lie in the grass and rest till morning.

It is very pleasant upon such occasions to sit by the camp fire for



No. 42.

DONKEY-WAGGON.

awhile, enjoying the quiet and freshness of the veld, or smoking and chatting with the natives, or listening as they spin their yarns about "Ole Brer Rabbit," and help one to a clearer understanding of their customs and speech.

Ox-waggon travelling is on the whole enjoyable, if one does not get too much of it. But when the rinderpest killed the oxen, and donkeys had to be used, it was another matter. Not to speak of their slowness and weakness, there is an amount

of original "cussedness" about a donkey that is simply appalling. Try to take your span through water, for instance (42), and you will get a new experience. And then a donkey will graze but little when the sun is warm. Even if it be hungry it will prefer the idleness and dreaminess of its noonday *siesta* to any grass that the veld can produce; for the donkey, you must know, is more of a Bohemian than a gourmand. And so if you do not let your span graze at night, they soon become too weak to do much work; but if you do leave them loose at night, it takes most of the next day to collect them together again. And yet any man with a sense of humour will forgive a span of donkeys almost anything for the joy of seeing their elegant attitudes when they are caught in a tropical shower (43). The very pose of the animal is so eloquent of patient endurance, one might almost say, scornful defiance, of trouble.



IN THE RAIN.

No. 43.

Native Churches

VISITORS to the Protectorate are usually surprised at the beautiful native churches in the central towns. In addition to those here shown, there is a fine new church at Ramocwa (or Ra-



No. 44.

NATIVE CHURCH, MOLEPOLOLE.

moutsa, as Englishmen will persist in spelling it), and an older and plainer building at Mochudi. Ramocwa is a station of the Lutheran Mission, which works principally in the Transvaal. Mochudi is a station of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa. Excellent work is being done at both places; and I regret my inability to include photographs



NATIVE CHURCH, KANYE.

No. 45.

of the churches. Time was when the Dutch Church of South Africa looked askance at all attempts to Christianise the native ; but now, after living alongside of the work for many years, they have a Missionary Committee of their own, which is supported by their leading ministers and laymen. This practical testimonial from whilom opponents must be of peculiar interest to the friends of Foreign Missions.

The three churches represented in these pictures are connected with the London Missionary Society. The church at Molepolole (44) is the oldest of the three. Dr. Livingstone founded the Bakwena Mission, and laboured there until duty compelled him to foot the sterner path that led into the regions



OLD MISSION HOUSE, KANYE.

No. 46.

beyond. Livingstone did not live at Molepolole. In his day the Bakwena lived first at Chonwane, which is between Gopani's *stad* and Ramocwa ; and then at Kolobeng, which is between Gaborone's and Molepolole. On one



No. 47.

NATIVE CHURCH, PALAPYE.

the bill. As for Livingstone, it was this rude breaking up of his home that set him finally free for the work of exploring the Dark Continent—a work which he had long wanted to be at, and which has made Africa so distinctly a part of the white man's burden. The Bakwena had to rebuild their town as best they could; and they built it at Molepolole.

The station at Kanye comes next in order of seniority, but the church there (45) is the newest of the three.

occasion, when Livingstone was absent, the Boers of the Transvaal made a raid upon the Bakwena town of Kolobeng, destroyed it, enslaved scores of the Bakwena boys and girls, and looted Livingstone's home. If there were any moral and intellectual damages attached to this raid, the raiders have probably paid



NATIVE CHURCH, PALAPYE (INTERIOR).

No. 48.

As far as external architecture is concerned, the pictures speak for themselves ; but it ought to be said that the church at Kanye is far ahead of the others in the beauty and convenience of its internal arrangements. It is somewhat larger than the church at Palapye, but it sacrifices a little accommodation for the sake of comfort and beauty ; and it was built at little more than half the cost, which, after making allowance for the cheaper transport, testifies to the business ability of the missionary in charge (the Rev. J. Good).



MISSION HOUSE, PALAPYE.

No. 49.

The old mission house at Kanye (a new one has been built since my last visit), shaded by its beautiful trees, almost defies the camera, and the view here presented (46), though it does not show the front of the house, is the only possible picture.

The interior of the native church at Palapye (47 and 48) is very unsightly. The roof is not ceiled, the walls are still rough from the hands of the plasterer, and it is not provided with seats. Such individual natives as are able and willing to leave a chair for their own convenience are permitted to do so ; the others sit upon the floor. It was built at an unfortunate time, when the people had not finished their new town, and the missionary (Rev. J. D. Hepburn) was on the point of leaving. When it was begun, the chief portion of the native town was on the plateau close by ; but before it was finished the people had moved down to the lower plateau, where the ground is better adapted to their method of building ; and so, unfortunately, the church is a mile from the town. There is usually a good congregation, however ; and when the people are not in the gardens it is often packed with a thousand worshippers. This church cost nearly £4,000, not counting the cost of the tower, which has been added since.

Strangers often criticise the London Missionary Society for spending so much money on native churches ; but the fact is, that the money was all subscribed by the natives themselves, each tribe raising the money within their own borders, without even begging from other communities who may be in sympathy with their scheme ; and this in addition to the continued support of various native



VIEW FROM THE MISSION HOUSE, PALAPYE.

teachers, and occasional help in other matters connected with the work of the mission. At Palapye, for instance, the native Christians surprised their missionary one morning with a present of over £350, to be added to the vote from home for the building of a new mission house (49).

Christianity is a poor affair if it does nothing but dabble in bricks and mortar. But when natives, who are stingy by nature, and who not many years ago were sunk in ignorance and barbarism, are willing to sacrifice their property for the sake of erecting places of worship, it may surely be taken for granted that they have been influenced by the Sermon on the Mount. A just appre-

ciation of the change that Christianity has wrought among the Bechuana would take far more space than is here available. But it is great—greater than is sometimes recognised by those who have not seen the degradation of a Bantu tribe whilst yet untouched by civilisation or Christianity. To come from home and compare the Bechuana, who are mere babes in Christian thought, feeling, and tradition, with the English, who are heirs to centuries of Christian influence and culture, is, of course, as unsatisfactory in its result as it is unfair in its method. But let one who has lived among the untouched tribes of the far interior, as I did in 1882–3, come south to Bechuanaland ; let



VIEW FROM THE MISSION HOUSE, PALAPYE.

No. 51.

him mark the barrenness of the country, and how constantly recurring drought and famine have affected the physique of the people ; and then let him compare the general tone of tribal life with that from which he has come. He

will surely agree that Christianity, in the few years that it has had in the Protectorate, has powerfully influenced the life of the people, especially in such matters as stealing, cattle-lifting, personal cruelty, slavery and kidnapping, witchcraft, the exposure of children and the neglect of the aged, the treatment of strangers, the position of women, and even in that most backward matter of all, industry. To judge the character of individuals is not so easy.



No. 52.

COTTAR'S SATURDAY NIGHT—SECWANA VERSION.

IX

Native Education

WHEN the missionaries came into Bechuanaland they found no written language ; and, naturally, their first work was to learn the language and commit it to writing. Now in language, as in music, it requires a trained ear to hear correctly ; and as knowledge has increased, mistakes have been rectified and orthography improved. It is now possible to take a raw youth, who has never seen letters, and in two months teach him to read his own tongue so that his neighbours shall understand him ; and wherever there is a native evangelist, reading, writing and a little simple arithmetic are taught. Thousands of natives read their own tongue intelligibly, and write a legible letter.

The elementary school at



RISING GENERATION.

Palapye (54) was built by Khama, at a cost of about £600, and is in charge of an English lady appointed by the London Missionary Society. This Society has placed a similar teacher at Molepolole, and intends not only to place one at each of their stations, but to organise somewhere in Bechuanaland a central school for training native teachers, and for the better



No. 54.

NATIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, PALAPYE.

education of the sons of chiefs and headmen. And it is surely desirable that they who will have the greatest

influence in the native affairs of the next generation, should be educated for the work they will have to do.

No generation of natives is ever without its men of genius ; and genius has ways of making itself felt, even though it be compelled to grow up in barbarism. The British nation has had, ere now, to face some black-skinned genius who has desolated English hearts and homes, and to shoot him down at heavy expense to the nation. A tithe of what we spend in native wars, judiciously invested in educators and civilisers, would enable the native to understand his rulers, and fit him for doing useful work in the empire.



No. 55. A COUPLE OF HOUSE-BOYS.

After all, from the taxpayer's point of view, as well as from the humanitarian standpoint, it is better to have a Khama than a Dingaan. But as yet the Government of the Protectorate has given absolutely no assistance in native education, and all that has been done, has been done by the unaided enterprise of the various missionary societies.



A GENERAL STORE, PALAPYE.

No. 56.

European Life in Khama's Town



PALAPYE, as Khama's town is called, is distinctly a native town. But there are few native towns in South Africa that do not provide a home and a living for Europeans, and in Palapye we have quite a little British community.

I have already referred to the presence of a British Magistrate, and that means, of course, a magistrate's clerk, European orderlies and jailer, and the inevitable jail. The jail is not a palatial

edifice : one might almost speak of it as a kind of pocket edition ; and the prisoners have as much fresh air and freedom as is compatible with detention. It is said that the jailer of a certain Transvaal jail once gave the prisoners notice that those who were not back by nine in the evening would be locked out. Our jail is not run on those lines. The prisoners spend most of the day in useful work, generally in the open air, and are not exposed to any unnecessary humiliation ; but they know they are prisoners, and are not likely to come back for the fun of the thing.

The Magistrate has more power than we are wont to associate with such an office ; but he exercises it with dignity, self-restraint, justice, and, where possible, kindly consideration. Both in court and jail common-sense rules rather than mere formalities and technicalities.

But most of the European residents are connected with one or other of the half-dozen stores that deal chiefly in native commodities. These stores are unpretentious buildings (56, 57), without shop-front or architectural adornment, but stocked with a miscellaneous assortment of merchandise.

Native trade has its own peculiarities, and many a first-class salesman from home



A MERCHANT'S HOME, PALAPYE.

would scarcely earn his salt in one of our stores. Native trade is not influenced by European fashions ; and, unfortunately, it cares more for price than quality. But it has to be carefully studied, none the less ; and the trader must know how to buy game-horns, ostrich-feathers, ivory, sheep, goats, cattle, maize, pumpkins, curiosities, and a dozen other oddments, as well as how to sell his imported wares. And besides, it takes much patience and good temper to do business with native customers. Their idea of business is unlimited

chaffer ; and the storekeeper who is courageous enough to quote a fair price at the outset and stick to it, will frequently have the mortification of seeing the article taken away to some other store, and probably sold at last for a smaller sum to one who will haggle for an hour. And yet, it is only fair to say, some of our traders do honestly



BUYING GRAIN IN FAMINE-TIME.

No. 59.



No. 60.

HOARE'S SMITHY, PALAPYE.

the value of which the native knew, while imported merchandise was charged to him at an exorbitant rate. Nowadays there is not much barter. English coins are current, except in the lower values, and the native insists on handling the shillings; but he still haggles for the high figure that he has been taught to expect, and everything is consequently very dear.

Our storekeepers open early. Often enough they are doing business

strive to teach the native a better method of trading.

Time was when trade was done by barter, and impossible prices were commonly quoted for native produce,



EAGLE KLOOF, CWAPOONG HILLS. No. 61.



No. 62.

CHRISTMAS IN THE TROPICS.

at six in the morning, but they shut for an hour at breakfast time and lunch time, and at five in the evening they close for the day.

As for social life, there is more than one would expect to find in a small up-country community. The presence of a few ladies and children tends to brighten and sweeten our social gatherings, as well as to raise the general tone of conversation, and occasionally there is a musical evening or a dance. Polo, cricket, tennis, rifle practice, each has its enthusiasts,

while riding and shooting provide constant enjoyment and exercise. Gossip is sometimes responsible for a little mischief; and we are not free from the petty jealousies and rivalries that are incident to a very parochial life; but there is much mutual helpfulness in case of sickness or trouble, and a constant recognition of the fact that we are all sons of the one fatherland.

We have our high days and holidays occasionally. Queen's birthday is usually observed, as it generally is in the



AFTERNOON TEA.



No. 64.

FIRST ENGLISH CHURCH, PALAPYE.

more distant parts of the empire. At Christmas the stores are closed for about a week, and picnics (62, 63) are organised. Eagle Kloof (61) is a favourite place for such picnics; but as Christmas occurs in the height of our African summer, there are many other spots at which it is possible to spend a few pleasant days.

Nor is church life altogether lacking in our little community. For years past we have had Sunday services in our mother-

tongue. At first we were content to hold the service in a merchant's parlour (58); then we bought a hut

and furnished it (64), and as the architecture was such very early English we thought it wise to stick up a notice-board, for the information of waggon travellers, who were constantly passing. The hut, however, was unpleasantly warm for an evening service, and two years ago we built ourselves a little church (65), on a piece of land that Khama gave for the purpose. The church is small, but it is large enough. The interior is as tasteful as the exterior. The service is partly liturgical, and is conducted gratuitously by the missionary resident on the station. The building is vested in the London Missionary Society ; and its deeds are, therefore, unhampered with creed or church policy ; and it has the distinction of being the first English church in the Bechuanaland Protectorate.



NEW ENGLISH CHURCH, PALAPYE.

No. 65.

Telegraphs and Railways

THERE is nothing more significant of the future in all Africa than that thin line of galvanised wire, which runs right away from Cape Town to Abercorn, on the south shores of Tanganyika. To wander in almost untrodden forests, fording rivers that have never been bridged, and climbing hills that have never been mapped, and then, suddenly, to come upon that thin line that links one straight away with London—there is something

so incongruous about it! But it is a pioneer of civilisation, and the fifty or sixty telegraph clerks that work the wire between Cape Colony and South Tanganyika are doing useful work in the extended empire.

There are better telegraph offices along this line than the one at Palapye (66), but it may be taken as a sample. From an architect's stand-



No. 66.

TELEGRAPH OFFICE, PALAPYE.

point the offices are not much, but the wire is exceedingly useful to government, commerce, and even to science.

“In June, 1898”—I quote from the B.S.A. report—“direct communication was established between Nkata Bay and the Royal Observatory, Cape Town, for the purpose of exchanging longitudinal signals in connection with the work of the Anglo-German boundary commission on Lake Nyassa. The telegraph operator at Nkata was a native who had received his training in the Blantyre telegraph office. The total distance over which direct communication was thus secured was about 2,500 miles,” and now the wire is open to Abercorn, on south Tanganyika.

The railway is a still more important contribution to the work of civilization. It passes through the Protectorate from Mafeking to Francistown, a distance of 363 miles, and on to Buluwayo, which is 120 miles farther north. Six years ago it took a month of waggon-travelling to get from the railway terminus at Vryburg to Khama's town. For two years past one has been able to get into a railway carriage at Palapye station, which is only 13 miles from the town, and to reach Cape Town about three days later, without even a change of carriage.

The construction of this railway was pushed on rapidly, on account of the war in Matabeleland and the famine and rinderpest in the Protectorate.



CONSTRUCTING THE CAPE-TO-CAIRO LINE AT PALAPYE.

The rails reached Buluwayo on October 19th, 1897, and during the preceding twelve months a distance of 335 miles was constructed. And yet the railway is no jerry-built affair. It is built on a three-feet-six gauge, the standard gauge for Cape railways, of substantial steel rails, weighing 60 lbs. to the yard, laid on steel sleepers, and well ballasted. True, the principal bridges were not built when the rails reached Buluwayo; the trains simply ran

down the river bank, crossed the sandy bottom, and climbed up the other side as best they could. This switchback arrangement provided a little excitement for those of us who happened to be in the train—we always expected that the train would have to be taken up the bank in penny numbers, but it rarely happened that the carriages had to be uncoupled. Since then substantial bridges have been built with steel superstructures; comfortable cottages provided for the workmen along the line; and the railway station at Palapye (69), like other stations, has been much improved, platforms being built and more accommodation provided. Indeed, it has now the air of an orderly and old-established concern.

In the building of this line there were



No. 68.

CONSTRUCTING THE LINE—WATER DIFFICULTY.

few engineering difficulties. Entering the Protectorate on the south it had to negotiate some difficult country in passing through the Lobatsi hills, and curves are frequent, but there are few cuttings or embankments even there. There is a little earthwork on approaching Mochudi, too, but there is scarcely any more along the whole line. The great difficulty was that of providing the workers with water. While work was going on in the neighbourhood of Palapye station, water had to be brought for 100 miles in tanks fitted into goods trucks (68), and sent along by every train; and once I waited on the banks of the Mahalapye river for about seven hours before our engine could get water enough to take it on to Mochudi.



PALAPYE RAILWAY STATION (UNFINISHED).

No. 69.

But all these difficulties have been overcome; the line is in good working order from Cape Town to Buluwayo; and soon another 150 miles will be complete. A few years ago a line from Cape Town to Cairo was thought to be a romantic dream, and yet most of us are now hoping to travel that way home before many years have passed; and when that line is complete there will be no need to allow the fertile uplands of the interior to remain unfruitful, nor to have our slave-chasers cruising in the Indian Ocean; and, what to some of us is more important still, there will be less of human pain and misery and more of healthy enjoyment and progress in the poor, diseased heart of Africa.



No. 70.

CAIRO-WARDS.

